

Evonik offers environmentally friendly alternative for microplastics (Polyethylene Beads) in exfoliants

- SIPERNAT® specialty silica offers formulators an environmentally friendly and economically viable alternative for polyethylene and polypropylene exfoliants
- Prominent international personal care companies have already switched to silica for their body care products
- Evonik ensures global availability and consistently high quality

Evonik Industries, Essen, is launching two new products to replace microplastics in peeling products: the specialty silica SIPERNAT® 2200 PC and SIPERNAT® 22 PC. A number of prominent international cosmetics companies already use the new specialty silica products in shower gels, facial care and body peeling products based on the prototypes released by Evonik in late 2013.

SIPERNAT® 2200 PC and SIPERNAT® 22 PC are listed as nature-identical by the International Natural and Organic Cosmetics Association (NATRUE), a globally active association for the promotion of natural skin care. This means the substance (in this case, silica or SiO₂) is already found naturally, but is not usually available in the required purity. Cosmetic products have very high purity standards. Although synthetic amorphous silica is identical to naturally occurring silica (such as sand) in chemical terms, its purity is significantly higher than natural silica due to the technical production process at Evonik.

In the past, cosmetic peeling products frequently contained microscopically small particles of polyethylene and polypropylene. "All leading manufacturers of cosmetics and body care products are currently working to replace abrasive microplastics particles," explains Andreas Fischer, the head of the Silica Business Line of the Evonik Resource Efficiency Segment. The background of this trend is the public debate about oceanic pollution caused by

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microplastics. In addition to plastic waste as the main cause, the discussion has also brought up synthetic particles in cosmetics. "The specialty silica SIPERNAT® with its high purity level is an ideal solution because it fully meets the requirements for abrasive particles," notes Fischer.

Compared to other replacement substances for polyethylene, the specialty silica SIPERNAT® also represents a viable economic alternative. The production at the industrial scale ensures economic, worldwide availability. At the same time, customers benefit from Evonik's decades of production and process experience as well as from the specific properties of SIPERNAT®, which can be quickly and easily integrated into the corresponding applications.

Evonik offers two different variants for manufacturers of cosmetics: SIPERNAT® 2200 PC features cleansing particles with a size of approx. 320 µm, while the particle size in SIPERNAT® 22 PC is approx. 120 µm. Both products have a microsponge structure. In addition to providing a cleansing function, this unique structure offers a major advantage over other microplastic replacements: silica can absorb liquid active ingredients and scents and carry them for release at a desired point – such as the application of a skin care product.

The specialty chemicals company produces SIPERNAT® PC grades in Europe; an expansion of the production to Asia and North America is in the planning stage. Uniform specifications and strict microbiological controls ensure that every customer is supplied reliably with consistently high quality. Fischer: "Evonik has been a reliable partner of the cosmetics industry for a long time, and our silica are used in many other life science products and pharmaceuticals. We are pleased to again offer new and innovative products to our customers with the two new SIPERNAT® PC grades."



Caption:

Evonik offers environmentally friendly alternative for microplastics in exfoliants (Source: istock/GlobalStock, the photo can be printed for articles about Evonik free of charge, provided source is stated.)

Company information

Evonik, the creative industrial group from Germany, is one of the world leaders in specialty chemicals. Profitable growth and a sustained increase in the value of the company form the heart of Evonik's corporate strategy. Its activities focus on the key megatrends health, nutrition, resource efficiency and globalization. Evonik benefits specifically from its innovative prowess and integrated technology platforms. Evonik is active in over 100 countries around the world. In fiscal 2013 more than 33,500 employees generated sales of around €12.7 billion and an operating profit (adjusted EBITDA) of about €2.0 billion.

Evonik Industries has been producing specialty chemical products in the Greater China region (Mainland China, Hong Kong and Taiwan) since the late 1970's; with wide-ranging trading relations already in place prior to this in the region. Evonik regards Greater China as one of the driving forces of the global economy and we consequently endeavour to grow our business in the region. The company now has around 3,200 employees in the Greater China region, the regional sales reached over €1 billion in 2013.

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